

POLK COUNTY OBSERVER

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MAYOR REPEATS ASSERTIONS

Council's Letter Calls Forth Spirited Reply From City's Chief Executive.

To the citizens and taxpayers of the city of Dallas:

Inasmuch as the new mayor has seen fit to make some statements and assertions in his message to the council that are not warranted by the facts, or at least subversive of the facts, we, the members of the council, whom he would vilify, have decided that we will set the exact condition of all the matters of which his message treats.

Instead of there being \$1,179.71 available for street improvements and general expenses, the mayor's own figures give the sum of \$2,579.71, and the mayor well knew that there was a considerable sum above this when certain streets that are in course of building are completed, that the council has paid for out of the general fund, will be repaid by the property abutting.

Instead of there being \$6,400 outstanding warrants, there is \$5,000, and Section 85 of our charter does not provide for the things set out in his message at all. This section only runs to and against the liability of the council, if there should be obligations uncovered. The mayor could have told you that against the outstanding warrants was a property of the value of \$7,000, at a low estimate. The quarry and crusher could be sold for \$5,000, and is worth very much more to the city, and the larger part of the warrants outstanding were given for the payment of this property.

The mayor calls the attention of the public to a like condition of county indebtedness to \$5,000, when at the present time our bank is holding, or was a few days ago, warrants to the amount of \$27,000, and he further knows that during the time that his law partner was county judge that the amount of outstanding warrants of the county were above this amount most of the time, and also, that this method of finances prevails all over the state, and it is the best for the taxpayer and business rather than pay taxes that are in advance. There is no occasion for arranging for a larger debt allowance. It is only at such times as the city is making permanent improvements that this apparent indebtedness will occur. The property benefited pays for the improvements, and when completed is collected and paid for without any relation to taxes, except for street intersections, and for this year the council has provided for them.

The mayor says streets and sewers are needed badly. But at all. Our streets are air and compare very favorably with other cities of our size, but civic pride, in keeping with our standing as a progressive city, to make good the advertising we are doing, we must stand not only our streets better, but stand for better things generally. We call the attention of the taxpayers at this time to the fact that your council made improvements last year at a cost of more than \$30,000, done the work at home with the labor of our own citizens, and they are all paid for, and I doubt if there is a single citizen in the city that would go back to old conditions. And another fact is positively known—the same was done for many thousands of dollars less than it could be contracted for or done in any other way.

And water supply. The mayor knows that when the present system and plan was entered into that the city had one of the best attorneys in the state to safeguard its interests, and that during the present year the council have had the matter gone over carefully by an able attorney, and also that the council have entered into new arrangements with the water company for water meters and that they are on the ground and will be installed as fast as possible, and that water rates will be reduced.

Finally the council are taxpayers, and would be the last men in the city to spend money foolishly, and we are certain that we are supported by a very large majority of the taxpayers and entirely by the business interests. The only two of the old council that stood for re-election, were elected by large majorities, and if the council find that conditions change and the taxpayers or business conditions do not warrant improvements, they will be ready at any time to change their policies.

Respectfully submitted,
Retiring Mayor A. B. Muir.
M. M. Ellis
E. B. Cooper
F. J. Coad
E. J. Shaw
C. Statin

MAYOR'S REPLY.

To the city council and taxpayers of Dallas:

I have no answer to make to the above statement further than to repeat and to emphasize every assertion made by me in my annual message to the council. The figures set forth in that message are absolutely correct. They were taken from the Treasurer's report, and no amount of juggling can change them. That the city has a floating indebtedness, not covered by bonds, to the amount of \$6307.70, we think none will have the hardihood to deny. That every cent of this indebtedness over and above the sum of \$5000 was created in direct violation of the provisions of the city charter, we think none will dispute, after a careful reading of the following section of our charter:

Section 85.—The indebtedness of the City of Dallas shall never in the aggregate exceed the sum of five thousand dollars, except by the issuance of bonds as in Section 81 of this act provided, and any debt or liability incurred in violation of this section, whether by borrowing money, loaning the credit of the City, or otherwise, is null and void, and of no effect as regards the City of Dallas. And any liability incurred or debt created in excess of the amount limited or authorized by this section of this act shall be taken and held by any court of this state as a joint and several liability and obligation of the members of the City Council voting for the same, and not a debt, liability or obligation of the City of Dallas. And the

voting for or creating such liability, obligation or debt by any member of the Council shall be conclusive evidence of malfeasance in office, and for which such member so voting may be removed from office.

The claim that "against these warrants there is property of the value of \$7000" has nothing to do with the case. Assuming, for the sake of argument, that the rock-crushing plant is worth the estimate placed upon it by the retiring council, and granting further that it is better to have something than nothing to show for the indebtedness created, the cold fact remains that each and every councilman voting for any warrant indebtedness in excess of \$5000 plainly violated the charter when he so cast his vote, and further made the debt his own personal obligation instead of that of the city when he voted. City warrants are paid with cash—not with rock crushers or street rollers. At one time, Polk County was \$120,000 in debt. The courthouse lot was probably worth a considerable portion of this amount, but that did not aid the taxpayers in any way in paying off the warrants. The county had to pay its debts with cash, just as the city will be obliged to tax its property owners to pay for its improvements. The taxpayers will have to go down into their pockets and dig up the money; that is to say, for every cent of the debt that has been lawfully created.

I said in my message that the Treasurer's report showed the amount of taxes this year to be about \$6000, and that of this sum \$4300 had been collected since March 1, leaving a balance of only \$1700 yet to be collected. Of this \$4300 already collected, \$1500 had been ordered transferred to the Street Fund and practically all of the remainder spent, there being only \$23.83 in the General Fund when the council met last Monday night. I recommended in my message that the money transferred to the Street Fund, be placed back in the General Fund, where it belongs, to the end that the city might have more than \$23 to pay its running expenses until the remaining \$1700 could be collected, which will probably not be until next Fall. As to the wisdom of this suggestion, I leave it to the people to decide, when they are informed that at the last meeting of the council \$987 worth of claims were allowed, with only \$23.83 in the General Fund to pay with. This indebtedness was all created by the old council in addition to the \$6307 warrant indebtedness already outstanding.

In the letter criticizing my message, the writer says the city has \$2879.71 to pay running expenses until next tax collecting time. This will be true, when the council transfers back to the General Fund the \$1156.87 wrongfully placed in the Street Fund, and that is what I recommended should be done. My contention is that with our finances in their present embarrassed condition, every cent belonging to the General Fund should be kept there to meet running expenses, instead of piling up a warrant indebtedness and burdensome interest charges. I strongly favor a continuation of street improvements, but with our finances in their present condition, I see no way how we can proceed lawfully except by calling a special election to ask the voters to amend the charter so that we can contract a legal indebtedness greater than that now permitted by the charter, and then give the property owners the benefit of the state law that allows them to pay for their improvements on the installment plan. This system would not be burdensome on the taxpayer, and would show an actual profit to the city for the money advanced for the improvements. In view of existing conditions, this seems to me the only business-like course to pursue.

In answer to the assertion that the city's warrant indebtedness is only \$5900 instead of nearly \$6400, I beg to submit the following showing of outstanding and unpaid warrants, taken from the Treasurer's books:

GENERAL FUND WARRANTS OUTSTANDING.
(Interest bearing.)

Waterworks Extension—due July 1, 1909.....	\$ 100.00
Rock Crusher and Roller—4 warrants for \$512 each due January 6, 1910, 1911, 1912, 1913, respectively.....	\$3248.00
Sewer Outlet—4 warrants for \$643.55 each; one-half due March 15, 1910; one-half due March 15, 1911.....	\$2574.30
Macadam on Court Street warrants amounting to.....	\$ 259.20
(To which must be added \$126 for warrants drawn and still in hands of the Auditor at time Treasurer made report).....	\$ 126.00
Total.....	\$6307.70

I said above that by collecting all of the \$1700 outstanding on the tax books, and adding thereto the amount wrongfully remaining in the Street Fund, the city would have \$2879.71 with which to pay running expenses for the next 10 months. I wish to correct these figures, however, for there must be deducted therefrom the sum of \$987, for which warrants were ordered drawn at the meeting last Monday night. This latter amount was all indebtedness contracted by the old council, and it should rightfully be counted in last year's business. So

in reality the council has only about \$1900 left now, out of the \$6000 voted for this year, and there are still 10 months in which to conduct the affairs of the city. It is a sorry showing, and I am willing to leave it to the taxpayers of Dallas to decide if the situation is not one that will require the most careful and conservative handling for the next 10 months.

In my message to the council, I endeavored to meet the situation frankly and openly, as any business man should face his own affairs when they are not in the most desirable condition. I am only sorry that it was not possible to make a better showing of the condition of our city treasury, but such a showing could not be made within the bounds of truth. I do not resent any criticism of my message, for time (and especially "tax-collecting time") will prove the correctness of my position to every taxpayer, just as the Treasurer's books prove it now. There was naught of malice in any word that I wrote, and my desire is to work harmoniously with every member of the council for the benefit of a greater and better Dallas.

In closing, I only desire to call attention to the following entirely uncalculated reference to my law partner, Judge Sibley, as follows: "He (Mayor Eakin), knows that during the time his law partner was County Judge, the amount of outstanding warrants in the county was above the county limit of indebtedness most of the time." I have no desire to answer this uncalculated and unjust statement further than to correct any wrong impression that might arise in the mind of any newcomer in Polk county. All of the older residents are familiar with the county financial affairs during Judge Sibley's term, and it is not necessary to make any explanation to them. The fact is, and the writer of the above criticism well knows it, that when Judge Sibley was elected to office, the county was groaning under an indebtedness of over \$120,000, not one cent of which was of his making; and they farther know that during his four-year term of office, this indebtedness was reduced to the sum of \$8000, and that a few months later a succeeding court paid off the last dollar of this small balance. Since that time, the county has been practically on a cash basis. The big debt was paid, but the court did not pay it by creating a Road Fund and transferring the money into it. The court paid the debt, stopped the blood-sucking interest charges, and then turned its attention to the greatly needed roads. I respectfully submit that such a course might be appreciated just now by the overburdened taxpayers of the City of Dallas.

H. C. EAKIN,
Mayor.

Freshman Class Gives Reception.

The Freshman reception at the Monmouth Normal, Saturday, was admittedly the banner reception of the year. The windows of the hall were decorated with pink and black, the class colors, which were also hung in festoons across the room. The stage was decorated with sweet brier and lilacs and with some 700 artificial roses which had been prepared by the class. A good program was rendered, each number being greeted with enthusiastic applause. Mrs. W. Carleton Smith, of Salem, sang a vocal solo which was especially appreciated. Colonel and Mrs. E. Hofer, of Salem, and several other guests from out of town were present.

Fire Destroys Millinery Store.

A fire breaking out in the Elite Millinery Store in the Uglow building yesterday morning destroyed practically all of the stock and fixtures and damaged the building itself to a very considerable extent. The flames were discovered while Miss Reddekopp, the proprietor of the store, was absent, and had gained considerable headway before the alarm could be turned in. After the arrival of the firemen the fire was easily brought under control and extinguished. The damage to the building is covered by no insurance but the stock and fixtures were insured for \$1500 which will in a large measure cover the loss.

Council Holds Adjourned Session.

The City Council approved only two of the bids on street improvement at its special meeting last night, all others being rejected. The bids accepted were both on curb building, one being entered by D. M. Metzger for the property about the Evangelical Church and one by W. L. Soehren, offering a rate of 5 cents per linear foot in front of certain specified pieces of property. Mr. Soehren's bid on general curb construction, together with a similar bid by John Olin and Frank Morrison's bid for hauling and distributing crushed rock at 70 cents per cubic yard, were all rejected.

The session of circuit court in Judge George H. Barnett's department which was convened yesterday morning, has attracted an exceptionally large crowd of people from all parts of Polk county to Dallas this week and the hotels of the city have been caring for larger throngs than they have entertained for some time.

THE PASSING OF A PIONEER

Hon. W. C. Brown Succumbs After Long Illness at His Home in Dallas.

Hon. W. C. Brown, pioneer of Oregon, and one of the oldest residents of Dallas, passed away quietly at his home in this city yesterday morning, after a long and hard struggle against the illness and feebleness of age that gradually overmastered him. For many days he had lain in a state almost of unconsciousness and his death came not unexpectedly, although up to the very last, hope was still entertained that he might again rally.

W. C. Brown was born in Hamilton county, Ohio, November 30, 1824 and came with the emigrants to Oregon in 1847 settling first near Albany and afterward moving to Polk county. He established the first store ever opened in Dallas, situated on the north side of the LaCreole. In after years the south side became the most populous and important and he transferred his store accordingly.

By careful management he built up a strong business and a comfortable fortune. He retired from active work about 10 years ago after having followed the mercantile business for nearly 40 years.

In 1874, Mr. Brown was elected representative from Polk county, serving in the state legislature during his term with great credit.

He was married in 1848, a short time after his arrival in Oregon, to Miss Martha Townsend, who died in 1899 at the age of 73 years, only a few months after the aged couple had celebrated their golden wedding anniversary. To this union were born the following children: John G. Brown, Ann Kersey, Joseph Brown, Alonzo Brown and Henry Brown. With the exception of Alonzo Brown, who died about five years ago, all of the children of W. C. Brown survive him. He is also survived by 11 grandchildren and 14 great grandchildren.

Mr. Brown was a charter member of both the Odd Fellows and Masonic lodges of this city and is claimed by some to have been the sole surviving charter member. He was also a member of the Eastern Star and Rebekah lodges. He was affiliated with no church, although at all times willing to lend such assistance as might be in his power to any of them without distinction. During his life he gained a reputation, almost national, for his many enterprises of benevolence and philanthropy.

The funeral will be held at the residence tomorrow (Wednesday) afternoon at 1 o'clock, the sermon being preached by Elder W. S. Martin, of the Adventist Church, of Portland. The remains will be buried at the family cemetery near Polk Station, and will be borne thither on a special motor secured for the occasion.

Etna School Closes With Picnic.

Etna School, District No. 45 closed Friday, May 7, with a pleasant picnic in the church grove. At 10 o'clock the children left the schoolhouse with baskets filled with good things to eat, and twelve o'clock found a lunch spread for twenty. The table was decorated with lilacs and oranges. The afternoon was spent in games, singing, speaking and a peanut hunt. Those present were: Johnnie Crowley, Clifford Wallace, William Edgar, Lois Gay, Esther Edgar, Ellen Wallace, Nettie Gay, Verda Williamson, Etta Edgar, Bessie Hunter, Pearl Wallace, Bonnie Gay, Opal Wallace, Etta Crowley, Ruth Morrison, Myrtle White, Alice Riggs, Mrs. Gertrude Bly and Edna Morrison, teacher.

Railroad to Haul Logs.

Arrangements have been completed whereby the sawmill at Independence will receive logs by train from the camps of C. K. Spaulding at Falls City and Black Rock. The logs will be brought to Dallas by the Salem, Falls City & Western, and from there by the Independence and Monmouth Railway. The first load of logs will be brought in to the mill about the middle of next week. By this arrangement the mill can now run at its full capacity. Formerly logs have been rafted down the river to the mill, and owing to extreme low water, it could not run all summer.

William Kinsey Is Dead.

William Kinsey, of Rickreall, died Sunday in East Portland, where he was under medical treatment. The deceased was born in Polk county in January 1838 and lived on his farm near Rickreall almost continuously. His only surviving relative is a sister, Miss Nancy Kinsey. The remains of the deceased will be brought up from Portland tomorrow (Wednesday) morning and the funeral services will be held at noon.

Lodge Notice.

Special communication of Jennings Lodge No. 3, A. F. & A. M., on Wednesday, May 12, at 12:30 p. m., for the purpose of conducting the burial services of our late brother, William C. Brown. All members and visiting brethren are requested to attend. By order of the W. M.

Legal Blanks at this office.

EPWORTH LEAGUE CONVENTION

Large Crowds Attend All Services And Delegates Take Active Interest in Work.

The Epworth League Convention held here last week was quite successful in spite of the rather limited attendance from other cities, the out of town delegates amounting to not more than 50. Rev. M. C. Wire, presiding elder for this district, explains the scant number of delegates by the fact that many who would otherwise have attended the convention are planning instead to attend the National Convention which will be held on the Pacific Coast this summer.

The convention was opened Friday night with a reception to the delegates in the Methodist Church. Rev. M. C. Wire gave an address of welcome and Miss Alpha Wilson, of the local chapter, and F. E. Fisher, representing the Young People's Endeavor Union, of Dallas, extended greetings, their addresses being answered by Harry McCain, of Salem, with a short and appropriate speech.

With few exceptions, the program for the three days was carried out exactly as it had been announced, the delegates and members taking an active interest in every detail of the work. The attendance at all of the evening services was excellent and on Sunday evening all churches in Dallas closed for the young people's meeting at the Methodist Church and preaching services in the Presbyterian and Evangelical Churches were also set aside to give the congregations an opportunity of hearing the sermon which closed the convention. The address on "Powerhouses of History" given by President Fletcher Homan, of Willamette University, Saturday night, was one of the especially excellent features of the convention and was heard by a large and appreciative audience.

Celebrate Silver Wedding.

A pleasant surprise party was given Mr. and Mrs. A. E. Myer, of Falls City, Tuesday night, by a number of their friends, the occasion being the twenty-fifth anniversary of their marriage. The evening was most enjoyably spent and delicious refreshments were served. Mr. and Mrs. Myer were the recipients of a large number of beautiful presents in token of the esteem in which they are held by their many friends. Those present were: Rev. and Mrs. LaDow, Mr. and Mrs. Z. Hinshaw, Mr. and Mrs. William Hinshaw, Mr. and Mrs. W. B. McKown, Mr. and Mrs. E. G. White, Mr. and Mrs. A. M. Vassall, Mr. and Mrs. N. C. Chapin, Mr. and Mrs. S. H. Tetherow, Mr. and Mrs. W. E. Gilbert, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Frink, Mr. and Mrs. Roy McMurphy, Mr. and Mrs. Till Bell, Misses Florence Burton, Bertha Frink, Eva Chapin, Mamie Hammond, Leatrice Graham, Cora VanSlike, Bloch Chapin, Alice Bennett and Pernal Myer.

Another Candy Sale.

The members of the Y. W. C. A. of the Dallas High School will hold another candy sale on the public school campus Friday. The sale held recently by them was successful beyond their expectations, their entire stock of candy being sold out before noon and a profit of about \$8.75 being cleared. The young women will have a larger and even more attractive stock at the coming sale and hope for still greater success. All are cordially invited to attend.

Ira Yocom this week sold a span of roadsters to Joe Buell at Bellevue for \$400. Another good price sale was that of a draft horse sold to Washington parties by J. J. Davis of Red Prairie for \$240.—Sheridan Sun.

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We have a new snappy lot of Boy's Suits. A look will convince you.

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It is economical because it can be quickly turned off when not needed. With gas or kerosene there is the temptation to let light burn when not needed to save bother of lighting and adjusting. In some homes the electric light bills amount to only one or two dollars per month. You can probably get some kind of artificial light for less money than electric light, but does it save you anything when it limits opportunities for work and recreation—ruins your eyesight—smokes your walls—mars decorations and increases household work. You could probably save a dollar tomorrow by going without your meals but it wouldn't be economy. It is not so much what you save, but how you save that counts.

WILLAMETTE VALLEY CO. RATES—Residence on meters, per Kilowatt 15c; Residence, flat per month, 16c. 50c. RATES FOR BUSINESS HOUSES—25c per drop and 5c per Kilowatt up to 10 drops; over 10 drops 20c per drop and 5c per Kilowatt up to 40 drops; over 40 drops 17c per drop and 5c per Kilowatt. A drop figures 16c or less. For power rates apply at the office. We are always ready to explain the "ins and outs" of the lighting proposition to you, call on us or phone to us, we are never too busy to talk business.

Willamette Valley Company

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